

MEMORANDUM FOR JOHN PODESTA

Date: Sunday, February 21, 2016
Time: 11:45 am – 2:00 pm
Location: Home of Tony Podesta
2438 Belmont Rd., NW
Washington, DC
From: Angelique Cannon, Mid-Atlantic Deputy National Finance
Director
David Reid, Washington, DC and PAC Finance Director
RE: Cooking Fundraiser with Tony Podesta and Chef Carla Hall

I. PURPOSE

YOU are headlining a finance event in support of Hillary for America at the home of Tony Podesta. Tony was the driving force behind this event. The purpose of the event is to raise money from Tony's network and engage a different set of supporters involved in the Washington, DC metro area food scene. This event is expected to raise \$75,000.

NOTE: This event was originally scheduled for January 24, but was postponed due to heavy snow in the DC area on that date.

II. PARTICIPANTS

- YOU
- Tony Podesta
- Chef Carla Hall
- 14 participants in the Champion Pre-Reception
- Approximately 191 attendees

III. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

11:45 pm Champion guests arrive, YOU proceed upstairs for Champion Pre-Reception with Tony, Chef Carla Hall and Champion contributors

12:00 pm General guests arrive/mix and mingle, YOU move downstairs

12:15pm YOU move to the Gallery and Tony welcomes guests to his home and introduces Carla Hall

12:18pm Carla Hall delivers brief remarks

12:23pm Tony introduces YOU

12:25pm YOU deliver brief remarks and open for questions from guests

12:45pm Tony calls last question

12:50pm Question and answer period concludes; Tony closes the program

12:55pm Program concludes and YOU mix and mingle with guests

1:45pm YOU participate in pull-aside meeting with Terry Lierman

2:00pm YOU depart

IV. PRESS PLAN

This event is CLOSED PRESS.

V. BACKGROUND

Attire: Business Casual

Tony was very interested in hosting a cooking fundraising event similar to the event he hosted last October with Chef James Alefantis, Chef Amy Brandwein and Chef Massimo Fabbri. Carla Hall is a personal friend of Frank and Sylvia White. They brought her on board to help him host a food-focused fundraiser.

Please thank everyone for their continued support and provide them with an overview of the campaign. You should prepared for questions about Senator Sanders and the result of the Nevada Caucus and polling numbers in South

Carolina.

YOU are participating a brief pull aside meeting with Terry Lierman immediately following the cooking event. Terry requested this meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to engage Terry on behalf of the campaign and to encourage him to commit to raising \$100,000 or more in primary contributions. Please also encourage Terry to serve to co-host and help raise for a future event with President Clinton or Secretary Clinton.

Guests contributed \$250 (\$500 PAC), \$500 (\$1,000 PAC) or \$1,000 (\$2,000 PAC) to attend the general reception. Guests contributed \$2,700, or \$5,000 PAC, to participate in the Champion pre-reception.

VI. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- Tony Podesta
- Chef Carla Hall

Attachments:

- 1 – Biographies
- 2 – Champion Pre-Reception Guest List
- 3 – Full Guest List
- 4 – Carla Hall Extended Bio
- 5 – Carla Hall CLIPS

BIOGRAPHY



Carla Hall

Co-Host

“The Chew” on ABC

Carla Hall is a co-host of ABC’s popular lifestyle series “The Chew,” seated alongside restaurateurs and “Iron Chef America” stars Mario Batali and Michael Symon, entertaining expert Clinton Kelly and health and wellness enthusiast Daphne Oz. Hall is best known as a competitor on Bravo’s “Top Chef,” where she won over audiences with her fun catch phrase, “Hootie Hoo” and her philosophy to always cook with love. Carla’s approach to cooking blends her classic French training and Southern upbringing for a twist on traditional favorites. She is committed to health and balance in everyday living.

Carla Hall’s Southern Kitchen — the chef’s first restaurant — is slated to open in Brooklyn, New York in 2016; an outlet is already open at Barclays Center in Brooklyn that has quickly gained a loyal following among Nets and Islanders fans. A fast-casual love letter to Nashville, the restaurant will feature iconic Nashville Hot Chicken and southern sides, anchored by Hall’s family recipes and perfected with her personal touches. Hall was the owner of Carla Hall Petite Cookies, an artisan cookie company that specialized in creating sweet and savory “petite bites of love” and other desserts. Her most recent cookbook, *Carla’s Comfort Food: Favorite Dishes from Around the World*, was published in April 2014, and her first cookbook, *Cooking with Love: Comfort Food That Hugs You*, was published in November 2012 and recently re-released in paperback.

A native of Nashville, Tennessee, Hall received a degree in Accounting from Howard University, but traveling through Europe awakened her passion for food and inspired a new career path. She attended L’Academie de Cuisine in Maryland where she completed her culinary training, going on to work as a Sous Chef at the Henley Park Hotel in Washington, DC. She also served as Executive Chef at both The State Plaza Hotel and

The Washington Club, and has taught classes at CulinAerie, Sur la Table and her alma mater, L'Academie de Cuisine. Hall is a true believer that, "If you're not in a good mood, the only thing you should make is a reservation".

Carla is also active with a number of charities and not-for-profit organizations that reflect her passion for causes close to her heart. She serves as a Board Member for the Pajama Program and GenYouth. Carla also actively works with Chef Jose Andres' World Central Kitchen Chef Network, DC Central Kitchen, The USO, St. Jude's Children's Hospital, Feeding America, WCR (Women Chefs and Restaurateurs) and she serves on the advisory boards for the Edible Academy for the New York Botanical Gardens and for the Food and Finance School in New York City. She lives in Washington, DC with her husband, Matthew Lyons, and stepson Noah.



Terry Lierman

Founder

Summit Global Ventures

Terry L. Lierman is the Founder of Summit Global Ventures. Most recently, Terry served as Treasurer for former governor Martin O'Malley's presidential campaign.

Lierman had previously served as Chief of Staff to House Democratic Whip Steny Hoyer, State Chairman of the Maryland Democratic Party, National Finance Co-Chair on Howard Dean's presidential campaign, and as Staff Director for the Senate Committee on Appropriations. Terry began his career in the health field at the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) in 1971, where he assisted in budget and policy development, grants, and contracts. Mr. Lierman received an M.A. from the University of Wisconsin, a B.A. from Winona State University and attended the University of Minnesota.

Lierman has contributed \$1,000 to Hillary for America in February 2016. Terry has expressed interest in helping raise for the campaign, but requested this meeting to discuss with you personally. The purpose of the meeting is to engage Terry on behalf of the campaign and to encourage him to commit to raising \$100,000 or more in primary contributions. Please also encourage Terry to serve to co-host and help raise for a future event with President Clinton or Secretary Clinton.

LIST OF CHAMPION PRE-RECEPTION PARTICIPANTS

Tom Amis

Attorney

Mercer Thompson LLC

Kristine Blackwood

Attorney

Arnold & Porter

Shelley Fidler

Principal

Van Ness Feldman

Melanie Kenderline

Energy Counselor to the Secretary

U.S. Department of Energy

Sachiko Kuno

Member

S&R Technology Holdings

Melissa Maxman

Member

Cozen O'Connor

Gueta Mezzetti

Lawyer

Self-Employed

David Morrison

Retired

Barbara Paxton

Director of Development

Helene Fuld College of Nursing

Tony Podesta

Owner

Podesta Group

Susan Sterling

Director

National Museum of Women in the Arts

Joan Tobin

Investments

Self-employed

Shelley Tomkin

Professor

Trinity Washington University

Sylvia White

Attorney

Self-employed

FULL GUEST LIST

Name	Occupation	Employer
Ruth Abrahams	Graphic Designer	Self-employed
Nazir Ahmed	President	Givingworks, Inc.
Eleanor Allen	Development	Advocates for Youth
Margaret Allen	Retired	N/A
Michele Altemus	Attorney	U.S. Department of Interior
Tom Amis	Attorney	Mercer Thompson LLC
Neill Archer Roan	Business Consultant	Self-employed
Lily Asrat	Doctor	Public Health Institute
		League of Conservation
Craig Auster	PAC Director	Voters
Paula Ballo Dailey	Artist	Self-employed
	Federal Relations and	
Ed Barron	Policy Director	Bayer CropScience
Claire Beeuwkes	Manager	Chemonics International
Jeffery Bell	Vice President	Claro KC LCC
Kristine Blackwood	Attorney	Arnold & Porter
		GW Medical Faculty
William Borden	Physician	Associates
	Managing Director,	
	External Affairs &	
Amanda Borden	Strategic Initiatives	KIPP DC
Martina Bradford	Owner	Palladian Hill Strategies
		Kratz, Quintos and Hansen
Francesca Broggin	Paralegal	LLP
Donna Callejon	Philanthropy	GlobalGiving
Sharron Caplan	Retired	N/A
Marie-Louise		American Federation of
Caravatti	Economist	Teachers
Dana Chasin	Attorney	Self-employed
Shabbir Cheema	Research	East West Center
	Assistant VP For Strategic	The George Washington
Jin Chon	Communications	University
Osman Chowdhury	Taxi Driver	Self-employed
Angela Clark	Attorney	U.S. Government

Leslie Cockburn	Writer/Director	Self-employed
Allen Combs	Digital Director	DDC Public Affairs
William Combs	Retired	N/A
Amy Cotton	Senior Policy Manager	National Council of Jewish Women
Lea Crusey	Acting Executive Director	Education Reform Now
Susan Cummins	Medical Officer	Advocacy
Brian Dailey	Artist	U.S. Government
Mark Dann	Regional Campaign & Outreach Manager	Self-employed
Bill Danvers	Senior Fellow	Compassion & Choices Center for American Progress
Sharon Davis	Attorney	Rothwell, Figg, Ernst & Manbeck
Laura Davis	Partner	Renew
Tricia Decker	Communications Associate	Nasdaq
Rudy DeLeon	Policy Analyst	Center for American Progress
Olvia Demetriou	Architect	HapstakDemetriou
Carol DiBattiste	CLO	Education Management Corporation
Doris Dixon	Legislative	U.S. Department of Education
Steve Dodd	Business Representative	Sheet Metal Workers
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Patricia Elwood	Protocol and International Affairs Director	DC Government
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Meredith Esposito	Dentist	Self-employed
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Shelley Fidler	Principal	Van Ness Feldman

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Peter Fox-Penner	Consultant	Development Bank
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Margot Friedman	Government Affairs	AFSCME
Alicia Froio	Consultant	Self-employed
David Gallalee	Associate Broker	Lincoln Property Company
Dipayan Ghosh	English Teacher	The International Center for
Michael Glick	Policy Advisor	Language Studies
Jennifer Glynn	Attorney	Facebook
Judi Gold	Teacher	Kirkland & Ellis LLP
Nicole Goldin	Director of Notary	DC Public Schools
Anna Gomez	Commissions and	DC Government, Office of
Michael Goo	Authentications	the Mayor
David Goodfriend	Economist	Self-employed
Bart Gordon	Attorney	Wiley Rein
Arthur Grant	Principal	AJW
Ellen Haas	Attorney/Lobbyist	Emmer Consulting, Inc.
Lloyd Hand	Lawyer	K&L Gates
Shannon Hayden	Manager	National Association of
Melanie Hayes	Consultant	Broadcasters
Cragg Hines	Senior Counsel	Self-employed
Lucy Holsonbake	N/A	King and Spalding
Outerbridge Horsey	Real Estate Agent	N/A
Jacob Hughes	Writer	TTR Sothebys
Harold Ickes	Teacher	Self-employed
Juan Carlos Iturregui	Architect	Northern Virginia
Bonnie Janis	Consulting	Community College
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	Entrepreneur	HDI
	Retired Executive	The Ickes & Enright Group, Inc
	Management	Self-employed
		Amgen
		ABIR

Kathryn Kailian	Aesthethician	Self-employed
Martha Kanter	Professor	New York University
Melanie Kaplan	Consultant	The Cohen Group
Brian Katulis	Senior Fellow, Middle	Center for American
Cathryn Keller	East, terrorism	Progress
Melanie Kenderdine	Museum Consultant	Self-employed
William Kooper	Energy Counselor to the	US Department of Energy
James Kopetsky	Secretary	Mortgage Bankers
Sachiko Kuno	AVP, State Government	Assocaition
Andrea LaRue	Affairs and Industry	ADDX Corporation
Gabe Lazarus	Relatio	S&R Technology Holdings
Terry Lierman	Management Consultant	NVG, LLC
Robert Liotta	Member	Medtronic
Barbara Liotta	Consultant	Summit Global Ventures
Dale Loy	Sr. Director, Market	Self-employed
Dennis Lucey	Access	Self-employed
Bonnie Luken	Venture	Self-employed
Anne MacMillan	Attorney	QIVLIQ Federal Group
Jennifer Madsen	Artist	Self-employed
Sabeen Malik	Painter	The Wonderful Company
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Katherine Marshall	Attorney	U.S. Department of State
David Mastrangelo	Lobbyist	Department of Justice
Melissa Maxman	Health Policy Advisor	Georgetown University
John McCarthy	Senior Advisor on Policy	U.S. House of
Yvette Meftah	Lawyer	Representatives
Judy Melamed	Professor	Cozen O'Connor
Kathleen Merrigan	Scheduler/Office Manager	Self-employed
Joel Meyer	Member	McCourt School of Public
Gueta Mezzetti	Consultant	Policy, Georgetown Univ.
	Chief of Staff	Retired
	Public information officer	George Washington
	Professor	University
	Business Executive	Dataminr, Inc.
	Lawyer	Self-employed

Joy Midman	Health Care Consultant	Midman Associates
MaryAnn Miller	Arts Commissioner	retired
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Carter Morris	Development	LLP
David Morrison	Retired	N/A
Martin Murray	Retired	N/A
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Barbara Paxton	Director of Development	Nursing
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Tony Podesta	Podesta Group	Owner
Stephanie Powers	Senior Director	Council on Foundations
Tom Quinn	Attorney	Venable, LLC
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Richard Rome	Real Estate	Savills Studley
Kim Ross	N/A	N/A
Chase Rynd	Museum Director	National Building Museum
Javier Saade	Venture Capital	CTV
		Montgomery County Public
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Paolo Sacco	Small Business Owner	Tosca
Sue Santa	Attorney	Council on Foundations
		U.S. Department of
Chuck Santangelo	Senior IT Policy Advisor	Homeland Security

Michael Savage	Attorney	US Trust
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Christina Sharon	Homemaker	N/A
Audrey Sheppard	Women's Health	Women's Health Consultant
Ambassador Osman	Consultant	
Siddique	Chairman/CEO	GRDI
Ambassador Osman		
Siddique	N/A	N/A
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	SVP for Government	League of Conservation
Tiernan Sittenfeld	Affairs	Voters
	Deputy Communications	Environmental Defense
Matthew Smelser	Director	Fund
Quinn Smelser	Student	N/A
		National Museum of
Susan Sterling	Director	Women In the Arts
Marcia Sternfeld	Teacher	Retired
Alyssa Suhm	N/A	N/A
		Securities and Exchange
Anne Sullivan	Lawyer	Commission
Anne Sullivan		
DeLeon	Relocation Specialist	NEBW
Marie Sylla	Attorney	T-Mobile
		Templeton Strategic
Kimberly Templeton	Consultant	Communications, LLC
Joan Tobin	Investments	Self-employed
		Trinity Washington
Shelley Tomkin	Professor	University
		Environmental Law and
Karen Torrent	Attorney	Policy Center
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Kurt Vorndran	Union Representative	NTEU
Jessica Wasserman	Attorney	Self-employed
	Managing Director,	
Karen Wawrzaszek	Wealth Advisor	Rockefeller & Co

Kathleen Welch	Political Committee Chair	League of Conservation Voters
Michael Werz	Senior Fellow	Center for American Progress
Jennifer Hendrixson	Professional Staff Member	House Foreign Affairs Committee
White	N/A	N/A
Sylvia White	Foreign Policy	National Security Council
Joshua White	Real Estate Broker	Christies International
Janet Whitman	Retired	N/A
Myla Williams	Nonprofit Executive	Equal Measure
Renee Yancey		Food and Drug Administration
Carolyn Yancey	Physician	U.S. Department of Agriculture
Jennifer Yezak	Government Affairs	U.S. Department of State
Sally Yozell	Senior Advisor	BuckleySandler LLP
Michael Zeldin	Attorney	

CARLA HALL EXTENDED BIO

NAME: Carla Hall

OCCUPATION: Chef, Entrepreneur, Television Personality

BIRTH DATE: May 12, 1964 (age 51)

EDUCATION: Howard University, L'Académie De Cuisine

PLACE OF BIRTH: Nashville, Tennessee

Born on May 12, 1964 in Nashville, Tennessee, Carla Hall worked as an accountant and model before turning her sights to cooking. She established herself as an executive chef and launched a number of businesses that included her own catering company and an artisanal cookie line.

Early Life: Carla Hall was born on May 12, 1964 in Nashville, Tennessee. She went on to attend Howard University's business school in Washington, D.C., earning her degree in accounting and then working for a time at Price Waterhouse, becoming a CPA. She eventually decided that career path wasn't for her and traveled to Europe to work as a runway and print model. It was while overseas taking part in the social scene that Hall began to develop her passion for cooking. She was also inspired by how her Grandma Thelma crafted meals well into her later years.

Contestant on 'Top Chef': Returning to the states, Hall started a lunch

delivery business and then attended L'Académie de Cuisine in Gaithersburg, Maryland, earning her certificate in the mid-1990s. After sous and executive chef positions at the Henley Park Hotel and Washington Club, she launched her own company in 2001, Alchemy Caterers. She is also the owner of Carla Hall Petite Cookies, an artisanal cookie line sold online and in stores across the East Coast and Midwest.

Hall eventually became a media personality as well, starring as a contestant on the reality TV series *Top Chef* from 2008-09 and making it to the finals. Known for her trademark shout “hootie hoo!” and her continued call to prepare food with care, Hall would return to the program three seasons later and was voted “fan favorite.”

Star on 'The Chew': In the fall of 2011, Hall joined the cast of *The Chew*, a daily lifestyle show on ABC that has major cooking components, with fellow co-hosts including Mario Batali and Michael Symon. The series has grown into a popular daytime mainstay. While handling hosting duties, Hall has also taken on the title of author, having published the books *Cooking With Love: Comfort Food That Hugs You* (2012) and *Carla's Comfort Foods: Favorite Dishes From Around the World* (2014).

CLIPS

WASHINGTONIAN: Carla Hall and Andy Shallal Team Up for a Modern-Southern Restaurant: Mule Bone

The restaurant will take over the current Eatonville space on 14th Street.

By Anna Spiegel on December 9, 2015

Eatonville on 14th Street is set for a complete makeover that goes well beyond fresh paint. Owner Andy Shallal—who's also behind *Busboys and Poets*—has teamed up with celebrity chef Carla Hall of *The Chew* for a new concept: Mule Bone, named after the play by Langston Hughes and Zora Neale Hurston.

Chef Carla Hall teams up with Andy Shallal for Mule Bone. “We’re starting a new chapter,” says Shallal. “It’s going to be modern-southern cooking, and keep up with the trends that are happening that pertain to southern food.”

Eatonville will close for business on January 17th after five years in business, and undergo renovations that will freshen the space, expand the bar area, and make the dining area more intimate (roughly 155 seats versus the 250 existing spaces). Hall will spearhead the menu and search for a full-time executive chef, who'll run the restaurant on a day-to-day basis. The team is also on the hunt for a new mixologist.

Shallal projects that Mule Bone will reopen in February. The new space will also hold a small retail component from Desiree Venn Frederic of Nomad Yard Collectiv.

Stay tuned for more details as they become available.

FORBES: Taste Test: Bite-Size Decadent Cookies From Chef Carla Hall

By Katie Kelly Bell JUL 7, 2015 @ 03:08 PM 692 VIEWS

Carla's Petite Cookies might be the best new cookies on store shelves these days. Chef Carla Hall is currently the co-host of ABC's "The Chew" but most of us know her as the fan favorite on Bravo's "Top Chef." Yet, like all chefs, celebrity or otherwise, she is at her best in the kitchen and these days she's baking up some wickedly good cookies.

Full disclosure, this story took a few extra days to finish because I had to keep interrupting the writing process to forage in my pantry for more sample bites of her cookies. Because they are so "bite size" and cute it is astonishingly easy to snarf down six or seven. It becomes a personal challenge to merely eat one. Hall adds that her personal challenge was deciding how small was too small—"I wanted to pack enough flavor into each tiny cookie to satisfy a craving while standing on its own." 6 Pack Cookies

Hall started the cookie business as an off-shoot of her catering company. "The cookies became a popular item with my clients, first as a menu item and later as family and client gifts. As I faded out the catering company, it made sense to continue to grow the cookie line," explains Hall. She is currently making combinations such as oatmeal, cranberry and white chocolate; lemon black pepper shortbread; black forest crinkle, and my

personal favorite: Mexican chocolate chip.

Each bite does indeed pack a punch. I can taste the butter, and the cinnamon, and the good chocolate. Her marketing phrase is that she uses “love” as her special ingredient—but her true special ingredient is quality. Hall isn’t skimping on the things (butter, chocolate, spices) that make a cookie something profound.

In fact, if I were all-time Cookie Judge of the World, I would definitely say Carla Hall’s nickel-sized versions are contenders.

PEOPLE: Carla Hall, Ming Tsai to host 2016 James Beard Awards

Awards celebrate excellence in cuisine, culinary writing, and culinary education

Jan 6, 2016 Bret Thorn

Celebrity chefs Carla Hall and Ming Tsai have been tapped to host this year’s James Beard Foundation Awards in the spring, the foundation said Wednesday.

Hall, a co-host of ABC television program “The Chew” and restaurateur of the soon-to-open Carla Hall’s Southern Kitchen, in Brooklyn, N.Y., will host the foundation’s prestigious Restaurant and Chef Awards, which will be held at the Lyric Opera of Chicago on May 2.

Tsai — a Beard Award winner; television personality; and owner of the restaurants Blue Ginger in Wellesley, Mass., and Blue Dragon in Boston — will host the Book, Broadcast & Journalism Awards at Pier Sixty in New York City on April 26.

“We’re delighted that Carla Hall and Ming Tsai will bring both their culinary and media talents to shine a light on how television has informed and entertained our world of food,” Beard Foundation president Susan Ungaro said in a press release. “We’re honored to have them act as hosts as we recognize the best of the best in our ever growing and changing food and media community.”

Semifinalists for the Restaurant and Chef Awards will be announced on Feb. 17. Those candidates will be voted on by a panel of more than 600 judges, including past winners and members of the food media. The nominees for the awards will be announced on March 15. The same panel will vote on those nominees, and the winners will be announced at a gala ceremony on May 2.

THE TENNESSEAN: TV chef Carla Hall champions hometown of Nashville

By Jim Myers, jtm Myers@tennessean.com 7:58 p.m. CDT September 29, 2015

Carla Hall sits in electric excitement, staring down at a white Styrofoam container balanced on her knees. The popular celebrity chef and star of ABC's "The Chew" was in town for the Music City Food + Wine Festival, with an upcoming schedule of receptions, cooking demonstrations, book signings and benefit dinners. Today, though, she is riding shotgun with me on a hot fish sandwich quest, her mother, Audrey, in the backseat, dispensing advice and hand sanitizer.

Our first stop is TJ's BarBQ & Fish, where we now sit in a makeshift backroom swapping stories with the owner, James Hunter, while his wife and two sons tend to the drive-thru hungry. Hunter returns to the fryer, assembles the sandwiches and then delivers the white containers. He's as gregarious as I remember, and I remember I loved his fish.

I watch while Hall launches an uncontrollable grin and flips open the lid. Steam curls up, delivering a drifting mixture of cornmeal and childhood memories. She takes a bite, closes her eyes and sways ever so slightly, lost in the rapture of pickle and crunch.

This is a story about hot fish sandwiches, but it begins with hot chicken. For most of its tongue-numbing life, hot chicken was simply a curious novelty served at two places, one a sidecar off the other. Somehow, in the past 10 years, it drifted into the fast lane and accelerated into our city's psyche. Somebody lit a match and boom, it was so everywhere that it had even been appropriated by a whole chain of white folks.

I spoke with Hall a few weeks ago in anticipation of her return to Nashville, the city where she grew up. Set to launch her first restaurant, Carla Hall's Southern Kitchen, in Brooklyn, N.Y., in November, we talked about her menu of Southern meat-and-three fare and her inclusion of Nashville-style hot chicken.

When I asked her about hot fish sandwiches, the energy jumped a few joules. Of course she knew about hot fish sandwiches. In her first cookbook, she included a recipe and insisted the photo be taken of the sandwich nestled in a white Styrofoam container, with holes poked in the lid to keep the bread from steaming into soggy oblivion. You can feel the hurt as she laments that the kitchen is too small to allow two fryers, forcing her to leave hot fish sandwiches off the menu.

We marveled at how this food has somehow been codified in a mysterious book of soul food lore so that when you walk into a joint and order a fish sandwich, this is what you will get: two slices of white bread (that's what makes it a sandwich), a healthy zigzag of yellow mustard, dill pickle chips, slivers of raw white onion and two large strips of cornmeal-crust fried whiting. Oh, and a shake, shake, shake of hot sauce. Catfish is optional.

I wrote about my summer romance for this North Nashville staple nine years ago and wanted to rekindle that love for a generation of new Nashvillians. In the intervening years, there has been a mention here and there about this peculiar delicacy, and Road Food gurus Jane and Michael Stern even devoted some ink to a couple Nashville locations, but it never seemed to vault its way into the stratosphere of Nashville celebrity like its capsicum-laced poultry cousin.

Still, the humble fish sandwich persists, without fanfare but with deep-seeded ubiquity within the African-American community. As Charles Drumright told me years ago while we waited in line at Mary's Old Fashioned Barbecue Pit, "It's a black thing."

TJ's fish hits all the right notes, the crust is superbly seasoned, tight and crunchy, and it's served with classic sides of spaghetti and slaw. If you think it an odd combination, you've never been to a church social or picnic in

North Nashville.

Carla Hall and I speculate that churchyards might indeed be the ultimate origin of this seemingly odd triumvirate of food. Fish fries have long been popular as a tasty and affordable meal for large gatherings. Logistically it can be prepared and served fresh out of the fryer in large batches, and it's easier and quicker than something such as fried chicken or barbecue. Spaghetti, too, is cheap and easy, and slaw, well, that just has to go on everything in the South.

Add some pickles, mustard (because ketchup would be gross), onions and hot sauce and it's a done deal. Fried fish may be a pan-Southern dish, and versions like this have been found as far away as South Carolina, but this particular amalgamation is rooted deeply in Nashville.

We get back in the car and head over to Ed's Fish and Pizza, arguably the oldest established fish sandwich joint in town, open since 1972. At 3 p.m. on a Friday it's busy, with cars snaking around back to the window and a steady pilgrimage through the front door. Loyalty, like grease, hangs in the air. To a person, they all declare Ed's "the best." Owner Anthony Drumwright avoids questions and points me to a customer sitting at the small counter, saying, "These people are repeaters."

Charles Bowers looks down at his sandwich, wipes his mouth and concurs. "I've been coming here since I was a boy. Every Friday. They know how to cook it exactly like I like it, extra crispy, because I'm extra hungry," and he lets out a laugh.

Drumwright is dry and borderline grumpy, but he's just playing me. Before I leave he's talked about all-stars who have been there, and how Richard Dent hired him in 2009 to drive to Canton, Ohio, to serve hot fish sandwiches at his induction into the NFL Hall of Fame. With Hall he can add to the panoply.

I notice a fish-shaped sign hanging from the ceiling, floating between the blue walls. It's painted with the de facto recipe, as if there were any question. "All orders served with onions, pickles, hot sauce and mustard." Is this, perhaps, the hot fish Rosetta Stone?

We stand outside and watch the traffic in and around the building. Carla Hall wonders if the restaurant she's been thinking of all day is the one across the street. She remembers fried pineapple but not the name. Audrey Hall corrects her about the location, and a discussion of the vagaries of memory ensues.

It's funny how we remember foods. The time and place, the taste and smell, the people we were with. Carla Hall recalls eating hot fish sandwiches with her sister and grandmother, waiting for her mother to get off her nursing shift. She remembers eating pizza at Ed's sometimes because they had it on the menu and that was reason enough, though they don't serve it anymore.

Audrey Hall shows wise restraint by not ordering a second fish sandwich, but she does get a piece of chess pie to go. Now, after feeling so full a few minutes ago, all I can think about is pie, and how much fun Carla Hall is as a traveling diner.

And that is something I will remember for a very long time.